MATTERS IN OLD MEXICO.

A GREAT MINING BOOM—BANKS AND BANKING SYSTEM.

Immigration From the United States Creates a New Issue in Mexican Politics.

[Special correspondence of the RECORD-UNION.]

CITY OF MEXICO, January 5, 1888.

The principal issue in Mexican politics this year seems to be *los Americanos*, judging from the prominence given by the Mexican press to the question of American immigration and colonization. The intolerance exhibited by the anti-American faction will do more toward bringing about that nightmare of their existence—annexation, or an American protectorate—than any other influence that could be brought to bear.

The United States may have no desire to extend her borders south of the Rio Grande, but she must insist that her citizens who settle in Mexico shall not be oppressed or ill-treated, so long as they behave themselves. If they cannot enjoy the same rights and privileges in Mexico that are accorded to Mexicans in the United States, Uncle Samuel should demand the reason why.

The Diaz party are intelligent enough to know that there is no danger of American interference with Mexican affairs if Americans are properly treated, and that the closer the connection between the two countries, the better for both. By his enlightened friendship for the United States and cultivation of more intimate relationship between the "sister Republics," President Diaz has done more for the material progress of Mexico than any half dozen of his predecessors. Never before in the history of Mexico has there been so much

ACTIVITY IN MINING

As at present. This is largely due to the fact that Mexicans are being aroused from their traditional lethargy by the great success of the many Americans who have invested their money in mines here. Last week, from the little southern harbor of Mazatlan alone, the sum of $113,428 99 was reported in silver bars.

A number of northern mines are reported in bonanza. In the State of Nuevo Leon the mines of "Santo Miro," of the Carralvo group; the "San Antonio," of Santa Catarina; "Durasno," and "La Americano" (all owned and operated by Americans) are yielding as never before.

In the States of Coahuila, Chihuahua and Durango are thousands of Americans, all busy as bees, digging wealth from the hills or reaping it from the plains. Several new mines have lately been discovered in the Sierra Madre; and so great is the rush thereto that the stages have been doubled on the lines, and all are crowded. At Zacatecas, also, new American companies are taking hold of some of the oldest mines and contracting to put in machinery. The "San Vincente," near the city of Zacatecas, is now paying dividends of $24,000 per month.

I was talking the other day with Hon. J. B. Grinnell, of Iowa—an ex-Congressman and the author of several books—who came down to Mexico City and has since gone to California. Said he: "I know millions of dollars that have gone into Mexican lands within the last few months. What is catching the eyes of capitalists is the magnificence of the corn and cotton lands. I have seen thousands of acres in Mexico that have been constantly farmed for a hundred years, and yet, this very year, produced

ONE HUNDRED BUSHELS OF CORN TO THE ACRE!"

Mr. Grinnell himself invested largely in Mexican lands during his trip.

Though gold in the ore is so rich and plentiful in Mexico, it has been proved beyond question that Cortez did not find much of it during his day, and that he lied abominably in his reports to the Spanish Emperor—probably with a view to thus enhance the value of his discoveries and win more honors for himself. At the time of the invasion the Aztecs had never learned any better method of obtaining gold than by sifting it from river sands. Montezuma told Cortez—says that industrious chronicles, Bernal Diaz—that the gold of his people "was obtained from the province of Zacatula, where the earth which contained it was washed in wooden vessels, and the gold-dust sank to the bottom." It was also said to exist in Tustepec, "where it was collected from the beds of rivers." In speaking of the various expeditions sent out by Cortez in search of mines, Diaz tells us that Gonzalo de Umbria, who went to Zacatula, found the natives there "washing gold out of the sand in small troughs."

If this were the only means employed (and no other is anywhere mentioned as belonging to that period), it is certain that the statements of Cortez and his crew were grossly exaggerated. Another proof of their vivid imaginings lies in the fact that with the exception of a few small trinkets, not a relic nor trace remains, either in Mexico or Spain, of the many marvelous things in wrought and beaten gold which they so glowingly described.

Neither do the chronicles record that a very great amount of treasure was actually gathered by the rapacious conqueror; yet all the schemes which his bold mind could invent must have been directed to this one object—not only to satisfy personal greed, but to meet the expectations of the Emperor, to whom, when he feared that he was to be deprived of his command, he had promised untold wealth and treasure.

Though torture of the most barbarous description was used to induce the natives to reveal the riches they were supposed to have hidden, no more was obtained; and so, in order that his Spanish sovereign might understand the absence of the promised treasure, Cortez cautiously wrote that it was all lost in that disastrous revolution which first drove him from the city. But if lost,

WHAT BECAME OF IT?

Gold will not melt away and disappear like salt or sugar, and if hidden never so securely, it would surely have come to light before to-day.

The Mexican Treasury Department has recently determined that the *reales* (twelve and a half cent pieces) and the *medias* (six cents), so long in circulation, shall be taken up and coined anew. It has also ordered that Government officers shall not receive money which has holes therein, or is short in its legal weight.

Soon after what was known as the "nickel riot," the Government sold the four million dollars worth of nickel coin stored in the palace, at a nominal value, to the London Bank, acting as agent. The amount paid was $800,000, and the nickel went directly to England.

When paper money was first issued in Mexico, popular prejudice against it was so strong and general that more formidable opposition to its introduction was anticipated. Business men, and those accustomed to handle large sums of money, had nothing to learn in regard to the superior convenience of paper; but it required some time for the small traders and the populace, whose prejudices in favor of metal were deeply rooted, to discover that the new currency was safer, as well as more convenient.

Already the circulation of the country has been swelled by fifteen millions of paper money, which is now received everywhere with confidence, and the metallic coinage, that had reigned supreme in Mexican commerce since the days of the conquest, has been relegated to the secondary position it has so long occupied in the United States.

COUNTERFEITING SILVER CURRENCY

Has always been an easy and prosperous business in Mexico. It required little skill and less machinery to imitate the artless coinage of former days. That now in circulation lacks the high finish of the United States mintage, and is extensively counterfeited. Every silver piece that crosses the counter of a merchant or the palm of an Indian huckster is carefully rung and inspected; yet, with the utmost care, it is difficult for any one handling much silver money here to avoid taking a certain proportion of bogus pieces.

In all the mints are museums of quaint and ingenious machines, dies and crucibles captured by Government police from the dens of this class of public robbers. The imitation of imperfectly finished silver and copper coins is at best but a barbaric art; but to falsify the complicated devices and exquisitely artistic productions of the American Bank Note Company demands a degree of criminal skill and culture which does not yet exist in Mexico. Hence, the evident advantage of the bank-note in point of safety has hastened its popular acceptance, and the prejudices which were so bitterly arrayed against its introduction have disappeared entirely from the cities and lines of commerce and retired to the Indian villages among the mountains.

According to the last balance-sheet of the National Bank of Mexico, that institution has on hand in cash $20,266,230 93, and in accounts payable $6,249,833 89; while the sum of $11,918,648 repraseents the value of its bills in circulation. This

BANCO NACIONAL MEXICANO

Was established in November of 1881, with a capital of eight millions and the privilege of increasing it to twenty millions. For every million of coin or metal in its coffers it is authorized to issue three millions in paper for circulation. It is chartered for thirty years, and is exempt from taxation during that period. It issues notes of one, two, three, five, ten, twenty-five, one hundred and one thousand dollars. In return for certain facilities afforded the Government, it has secured a monopoly of the Government business, and the stipulation that its notes shall be receivable for all imports and duties due the Federal Government, and for those of the States by special agreement with their respective Governors—which privilege is secured for the term of its charter (thirty years) to the exclusion of all other paper money. The National bank has branches in the cities of Vera Cruz, Puebla, Guanajuato, Guadalajara, San Luis Potosi and Merida, and agencies all over the Republic.

The Bank of London, Mexico and South America was established in Mexico City in 1864. Its principal office is in London, with another branch in Lima, Peru, and various agencies elsewhere. It has a capital of ten millions, and is not chartered, having been organized at a time when there were no banking laws in Mexico. Since 1865 it has issued notes of circulation of denominations from ten to one thousand dollars. Since 1881 it has increased its paper circulation and added notes of five dollars. Its paper circulation is now estimated at about three millions, and the notes of this bank are not received for Government dues.

THE MERCANTILE BANK OF MEXICO

Was also established in 1881, with a capital of four millions. It issues notes of denominations from one to one thousand dollars, and has now a paper circulation of four millions, and branches in Puebla, Vera Cruz and San Luis Potosi.

The "Banco Hipothecario Mexicano" was established in the spring of 1882, with a capital of five millions. Its business is to deal in bonds and mortgages on real estate, its charter extending for ninety-nine years, with a monopoly assured for the first twenty years of its existence, the Government being bound not to charter any other bank with like privileges during that period.

There is also the Banco de Empleados, or Public Employes' Bank, recently chartered and so lately in operation that its special functions are not yet clearly understood by the general public.

The "Bolso Mercantile" (Merchants' Exchange) is another recent establishment in this city. A State Bank has been founded in Chihuahua, which issues notes of circulation, and also in several other States, but I am not informed as to the character of their operations or the amount of capital employed. The foregoing brief notes, however, will indicate the rapid progress of bank paper circulation in this country, and the strong probability that it will continue to increase until silver is superseded in all the more important commercial transactions.

About the time these banks were chartered a general banking law, modeled after that of the United States, was presented to Congress, but failed to pass. Yet there seems to be a disposition, both at the Capital as in the States, to grant concessions for banks to any responsible parties who may desire to establish them. Thus it appears that neither popular prejudices, nor ancestral traditions, nor the adverse influences of the mints and all-important silver-mining interests, have had the slightest effect in checking the paper-currency movement, which, with the completed railroad connections with the United States, immigration, and the extension of commercial relations now rapidly progressing with Europe and the North, will have become so generally recognized in business that the mismanagement or accidental failure of a bank will not seriously affect its supremacy; and we may confidently calculate that the day is not distant when Mexico will have a clean decimal currency of gold, silver and nickel for all retail business, and a sufficient volume of sound and well-authenticated paper currency to answer all the demands of her growing prosperity.

FANNIE B. WARD.

"In Favor of the Thing That Did It."

The quaint philosophy of "Bill Arp," of Georgia, is familiar to most newspaper readers. He has been considering the tariff question of late and gives the following actual, personal experience as a reason for the faith he now has in the policy of protection to home industries:

"You know I was an old-fashioned Democrat, brought up to believe in free trade and sailors' rights. I am one now; but something has happened. I own a little farm near Cartersville. I used to gather my corn and sell it in Atlanta for whatever they would give me. I had some pasture land for my stock, and I raised wheat, vegetables, and fruit in a small way. What we could not consume was wasted. When the tariff went into operation old Joe Brown started some iron developments near by, and the Cartersville station became quite a village. The day before I left home I sold seventeen loads of hay. Buyers didn't bargain for it, but came and took all I could spare at my own price. I haven't sold a bushel of corn in several years. Those fellows come and buy it by the dozen for roasting ears. It's so with everything that grows on my land. I cannot raise as much as they want. I'm in favor of the thing that did it, so I'm a protectionist."

There are many thousands of citizens who do not know much about protection or free trade theories, but who are "in favor of the thing that did it," and therefore are protectionists. The experience at Cartersville is multiplied thousands of times all over the country, affording object lessons that teach the value of protection, which no theroizing can overcome. They see that protection has diversified industry, brought the workshop to the side of the farm, made a profitable market for home products, and given an impulse to trade and transportation, through all of which the nation has prospered wonderfully. They see this with their own eyes, and feel it in their own pockets. They "are in favor of the thing that did it," and that is protection.—*Cleveland Leader.*

A Sure Thing.

There are very few things in this life of which we may be absolutely certain, but this is one of them: That Dr. Pierce's "Pleasant Purgative Pellets" have no equal as a cathartic in derangement of the liver, stomach and bowels. They are very small and their action is pleasant. Purely vegetable, perfectly harmless. Twenty-five cents a vial. All druggists.

TENNYSON A QUEER FISH.—Tennyson, in his own grounds at home, looks the poet from top to toe. He is even theatrically costumed, in his dashing felt wide-awake, Byronic collar carelessly lolling like a dog's ear over an anyhow-wisped-up neckerchief, and the famous Inverness cape, half coat, half cloak, flung grandly over his shoulders. It was only a few weeks ago that I saw the noble hermit who is England's poet laureate. It was in a busy London thoroughfare, midday, and his lordship looked as thoroughly a fish out of water as any Norwegian rustic who strays into Broadway from Castle Garden.—*Boston Traveller.*

FOR the cure of a cough or sore throat, "Brown's Bronchial Troches" are a simple remedy.

LAND OF THE CZAR.

IMPRESSIONS OF AN AMERICAN TRAVELER IN RUSSIA.

The Gates Wide to Those Who Enter, But Narrow to Those Who Would Go Out.

Less is known of Russia, both inside and outside the Empire, than of any other country yet discovered. But a great deal has been written about it and published in every language. In some countries the reading people think they know all about Russia, and have a very exalted opinion of it, while in others the effect of reading has led the people to despise not only Russia as a country, but the inhabitants and all who have to do with governing it. Most that I read of Russia in America and learned in England was apocryphal. Even the maps misled me, and those who had visited the country could render little assistance in telling me where to begin and where to end my journey.

When, a few weeks ago in New York, I determined to visit Russia, and called upon some acquaintances for information on the subject I was to investigate, I was told that my trip would certainly be one of great pleasure and supreme delight; that the stories concerning the despotism in Russia were false; that I need have no fear of dungeon horrors and Siberia, and that I should proceed with the same deliberation and uninterruption I would traverse any other portion of the continent. At London my English friends looked aghast, and declared that I took my life in my hands when I entered Russia, and remonstrated against it. The English know more of the country, the customs, and the alleged laws, I find, than the Americans; but being more excitable and prejudiced, they are less likely to do justice to the subject. The English have said and done so much against Russia that, as a general rule, they do not receive the few civilities and privileges granted strangers.

After a fortnight's sojourn in the region of the capital of the empire, I am constrained to believe that very little injustice could be done the Government were one to write it all down as diabolical and bad, for I have been unable as yet to discover a single act or design intended to ameliorate the tyranny and the burdens the people bear. I thought it quite exacting to have my passport vised by the Russian Ministry at Washington, or the Consul at the point where I entered the country, before I could see the Russian soil, when a passport, plain and simple, is required in no other country a man visits in all Europe; but when I learned that even the natives of Russia must take out a passport every year and have it regularly vised by the local officer before they are exempt from contempt of the Emperor, I concluded that strangers were quite as well favored as the Czar's own subjects. The object in requiring natives to have passports is revenue, while aliens are put to this trouble and expense for the purpose of inducing them to stay out of Russia. All Russians must be naturalized if they remain in the country, and their passports, which cost them ten rubles a year (about $4 50), is evidence of their naturalization.

At the frontier the stranger encounters little in the forms different from other countries. The modes of inspecting baggage and withstanding personal scrutiny do not vary greatly from the usual. But as everything in Russia is distinctly Russian, and therefore exceedingly strange, the most experienced traveler is possessed of a sense of concern, if not fear. The through trains from Vienna, Berlin, and other popular points of departure for Russia, land one on the frontier at night. The place is small, and the station swarms with Russian officers, big, burly fellows, with swarthy, unintelligent faces covered with long, flowing beards, and all dressed in the most elaborate uniforms. There is a clanking of swords, a rattling of spurs, a din of voices, and a rushing hither and thither that is appalling. Timid women traveling alone have become overcome with fear or lost their head in this bustle.

The gendarme in charge is the first officer who approaches the incomer. This is the highest ranking military official, and he takes up the passports. He is arrayed like a Napoleon—a broad-topped cap of red, white and black; dark green frock coat, trimmed with white and decked with brass epaulets weighing pounds; a huge belt and a sword, which is hung to strike the ground at every step and rattle like musketry; pantaloons with a deep white stripe and tucked in knee-top boots; spurs of enormous proportions, and a revolver of sufficient size to gun for buffalo. The passports and gendarme disappear in the direction of the office of the Russian Consul, where the documents are examined.

On the heels of this diplomatic officer come the customs lackeys, who, without ceremony of invitation, pick up the satchels, bags and bundles, exclaim in Russian: "Custom-house!" and put out. The traveler follows. He finds his trunks already on the counters inside the station, and if they are unlocked they are open and the contents are being dumped on the floor. The terror of the Russian Government is printed matter. Every newspaper, circular or book found is taken out and sent to the gendarme and the Consul. If anything about free government, free schools, or other free institutions, criticism of Russia or her form of government, is found, it is retained; and should it appear among the possibilities that the bearer has any design upon the Russian way of doing things, he or she is detained for examination. It does not appear in history or tradition that persons "detained" have ever proven their missions clear. They simply have been heard of no more.

A Londoner who had a couple of trunks displayed his English blood by stepping behind the long counter when his baggage was pulled out of the wire cage, where it stays till opened, and beginning to unlock it. The officers snatched the keys from the traveler's hands and pushed him back in line with others. When the trunks were opened, the Englishman paid for his forwardness by seeing his goods dumped out on the floor and everything mussed and left for him to care for. There was no complaint. To complain means to detain, for the Russian officers are as suspicious as they are officious. All stand in together, and they have such unlimited license that one is at their mercy.

I tried to anticipate the officers as much as possible, and, having left my trunk in Paris, eagerly opened my satchels. The pockets of my garments were turned inside out, letters were squeezed, a traveling cap ditto, and socks, which were turned in together, were pulled out and looked into.

Here I encountered money-changers who were evidently direct lineal descendants of those who were cast out of the temple. I had seen money-changers at other frontier places, but none like these. No sooner had I emerged from the customs-room to the adjoining restaurant for a cup of the famous Russia tea than the brace of money-changers approached me. Both about six feet in hight, they wore black robes which came to their feet, and black crowns, giving them an ecclesiastical appearance. One was probably seventy years old, while the other was pushing three score and ten. Both wore the patriarchal beard—one full white, the other as densely black as it was long. They were inseparable, and their black eyes flashed behind far-extending foreheads, and their large, sinful mouths trembled and quivered under the great beaked noses as they simply extended their hands well-filled with paper roubles, and chuckled in solicitation. Fortunately, I had procured a sufficiency of Russian money of my banker at Vienna, and did not suffer the discount of from one to five per cent. at the hands of the money-changers, who frequently rob the unsophisticated traveler to an alarming extent.

Trains entering or emerging from Russia do not pretend to respect their time-card, for the reason that they are often detained on the frontier. Two hours are always taken, however, being the time required for examining baggage and passports, long or short. On this occasion the train was light, and the baggage was soon inspected. But the passengers were not permitted to resume their place in the train. As soon as they escaped the custom officers they were led into the adjoining restaurant—men, women and children—where were all classes of people in every condition. All outer doors were locked, and were guarded by officers. Timid, delicate women hovered in the corners and waited for the end of the two hours, while half-intoxicated Russians crowded about, smoking nasty cigars or drinking steaming tea at the tables. Slavs, Greeks, Persians, Swedes, Russians, Germans, not an English voice was heard; and seldom did one see a man who could interpret even a sign. The women were more ready and bright, and divined the wishes of travelers more readily.

Finally a Russian rushed like mad from the station and began ringing a bell. There was a commotion inside. The bell-ringer moved up and down the long platform and made much unnecessary noise. The doors were unlocked and the passengers passed out, an officer being ready to see that each parcel bore the stamp of the custom-house. An hour and a half of unnecessary, disagreeable waiting made one appreciate the atmosphere, chilly even in August. Just before the train started a jingle of spurs and sabers was heard, and two gendarmes appeared. They entered the carriages and handed out the passports. Each passport bore a simple and short signature—that of the Consul or Governor—and the seal of the officer. Two or three passengers did not receive their passports, because the documents were not vised, and they were obliged to remain and explain. As the train rolled on from the frontier toward Warsaw and St. Petersburg the proverb, "The gates of Russia are wide to those who enter, but narrow to those who go out," lingered in my mind.

The American traveler is quite as much impressed with the quaintness of the country and the remarkable character of the people when he arrives at Cracow or Warsaw (the latter the old Capital of Poland, now subject to Russia), as he has with any other part of the country. The characteristics of the Poles, so far as the construction of a city goes, are as far at variance with the English or American as those of the Russians. Strange old buildings, covered with crazy characters and pictures, broad, roughly-bowldered streets filled with droskies, the prevalent vehicle, make one feel that anything is possible in this country.

The face of Russia is like Wisconsin, less the lakes and beautiful streams; Northern Michigan, without the largest pine trees, and New Mexico, with the absence of warmth. The pineries are stunted, the fields covered with wheat—in harvest during August—and the villages are of small wooden buildings covered with straw. Nowhere is there architecture, taste or cleanliness displayed. The advancement of the country may be illustrated in the statement that, though Russia is one of the greatest in wheat producing, the cereal is sown broadcast, harvested with the sickle, thrashed with the flail, and three-fourths of the work is done by the women. The forests are infested by wolves and other wild animals; the fields, when not covered with wheat, are carpeted with Jean Marie, with a yellow rattle and a plume of blue leaves at the top. Mushrooms and all the fungi of a cold climate are seen, and one's bewilderment increases as the slow train goes further and further into the Empire.—*St. Petersburg Correspondent N. Y. Sun.*

PLEASANTRIES.

THE GAY GARROTER'S WAY.

The gay garroter plies his trade,
And festive fun doth poke
At sober citizens who don't
Know how to take a joke.

He nabs 'em by the neck and says:
They are but stupid folk,
Who on occasion, now and then,
Can't take a little joke.
—*Boston Globe.*

An English journal offers a prize for the cause of baldness. We know, but we darsen't tell.—*Burlington Free Press.*

Irishman, seeing a deeply-laden vessel: "Upon my sowl, if the river rises a little higher, the ship will go to the bottom."—*Washington Critic.*

An Eastern paper has been sued for libel by a widow for speaking of her deceased husband as having "gone to a happier home." There's no pleasing some folks.

It troubles a man who has raced wildly down the station to catch a departing train, to have the train stop just outside the depot and back in again to take on another car.—*Somerville Journal.*

The American banking system which some are trying to introduce among the Celestials. "Why?" China is too far from Canada, and in China the dishonest Cashiers and Presidents would lose their heads.

Editor—"We see our last paper had many j's instead of i's. 'Twasn't because Bjornsen was contributing to this paper, but the type jn our new dress got a little mixed; but jt will be all right jn a day or two."—*Peorja Transcript.*

Arithmetic.—Laura—"So you are really engaged to him, dear? He is forty, you say, and you are twenty—just twice as old as you, love. Dear me, when you are forty he will be eighty?" Clara—"Good gracious! I hadn't thought of that!"—*Harper's Bazaar.*

"Ma," said Bobby, running into the house, "you said that if I did a real act of kindness this afternoon I could have a piece of pie, and I've just done it." "What was the act of kindness, Bobby?" inquired his mother while he ate the pie. And Bobby replied between bites: "A cat came into our back yard and I didn't stone it."—*The Epoch.*

Boston Young Lady—"Don't say 'vase,' Polly; the word is pronounced 'vawze.'" Country Cousin—"Certainly, dear. Well, as I was saying, I went down town to buy some lawze to trim my hat, and I walked at such a pawze that people must have thought I was in for a rawze, and when I got to the store my fawze was as red as fire. Do correct me when I say anything countrified, won't you, Anastawzia."—*Boston Beacon.*

A Wonderful Watch Dial.

A gentleman connected with the Illinois Watch Company has a wonderfully curious watch dial. Instead of Roman numerals to denote the hours, there are eleven small but very distinct silhouette figures, representing a man out with his dog for a day's sport. At 7 o'clock he is seen starting out with his gun and dog; at 8 o'clock he makes a shot; at 9 o'clock he has a sandhill crane which measures as long as himself; at 10 o'clock the man and his dog are scared at the sight of a jack-rabbit, which is sitting upon his hind legs with his big long ears raised above the bushes; at 11 o'clock the hunter takes a drink and while in this attitude the dog sits in front of his master, with his nose pointing directly at the flask; at 12 o'clock the sportsman is seen sitting on a stump, and is eating a lunch—the dog is eyeing the piece of bread the hunter has in his hand. At 1 o'clock he starts out to fish the rest of the day, and so he takes his dog and fishing tackle, and goes to the water; at 2 o'clock the dog, which is behind his master, has been caught with the hook, by an attempt to thrown in the line; at 3 o'clock he and the dog are all straightened out again, and the line is in the water, he has both hands on the pole and his foot braced on a stump by the water's edge, as though he had a tremendous bite; at 4 o'clock the man has got a big fish on his line, which has pulled him off his feet, and he falls on the dog and doubles him all up, but the man is holding fast to the pole, which is bent almost double; at 5 o'clock he is all straightened out again, his pole is thrown across his shoulder, and with his fish in the other hand he starts for home, the dog following behind with his head hanging down, being all tired out. The man's name is also painted in the center of the dial in rustic letters. The dial reflects a great deal of credit upon the artist, Chas. Gever. The figure VI. is superseded by the seconds.—*Jewelry News.*

NO SUFFERER from any scrofulous disease, who will fairly try Ayer's Sarsaparilla, need despair of a cure. This remedy purges the blood of all impurities, destroys the germs of scrofula, and infuses new life and vigor throughout the physical organization.

FORD'S THEATER.

THE BUILDING WHERE LINCOLN WAS ASSASSINATED.

Its Strange History—Scenes Theological, Theatrical, Tragical and Ghastly—Etc.

The Washington correspondent of the St. Louis *Globe-Democrat* sends to that paper the following interesting letter concerning the famous Ford's Theater, where President Lincoln was assassinated, and the museum which has since occupied it:

The Government will soon have to find new uses for Ford's Theater. After the assassination of Lincoln public sentiment revolted at the idea that the place should continue to be a play-house. A proposition to transfer the property to the Government was readily entertained by the proprietor. The purchase price was $88,000. At that time the medical and surgical branch of the Government service had collected a great number of curious specimens from the battle-fields and the hospitals. The war was over. The temporary depositories of these specimens in various parts of the country were being given up and the Surgeon-General was at a loss to know what to do with the thousands of anatomical relics. For a short time the old theater was used as a storehouse for Confederate State papers and documents. Then came the suggestion that it should be turned over to the Surgeon-General. It was accepted as peculiarly fitting. And thus the building in which the President received his mortal wound became the storehouse for the ghastly records and still more ghastly relics of the army surgeons.

THE OLD THEATER.

Ford's Theater was built with heavy walls and a severely plain and solemn front, for a church. When it was transformed the first time the pulpit gave place to a stage, the pews were replaced by orchestra chairs, pillars were put in to support a dress-circle and a place aloft for the "gods." But the changes were all interior. The front was still the front of a church. And when the second transformation took place after the assassination all interior likeness to a theater disappeared. There were arranged two stories with halls and rooms for offices in which the records were kept. This left an upper room quite high and nearly as wide and long as the building. The third floor became the Army Medical Museum, one of the legitimate objects of interest to Washington visitors. It was filled with show cases, and in these were arranged the skeletons, the detached bones, the jars and casts. But the front remained unchanged. For church, theater and medical museum it was and is the same.

F street is the thoroughfare between the groups of Government buildings. At one end it runs plump against the side of the Treasury building, with the White House and the War, Navy and State Departments beyond. Eight blocks east of this group is the other group, consisting of the Post-office Department, the Interior Department and the Patent Office. Ford's Theater is between the two groups, being only a few steps off, on a side street from F. The location is very central, and, for twenty years, few sight-seeing strangers, who made the tour of the departments, have failed to visit "the place where Lincoln was shot." Some years, such as the Centennial and the inauguration years, the number of visitors to the museum ran up to nearly 100,000. There have been other years when not more than 25,000 climbed the iron stairs to wander among the glass cases and look out of the third story window down into the alley where Booth had his horse in waiting to make the ride for life after the shooting.

WHERE LINCOLN WAS SHOT.

People with weak nerves do not tarry long among the bones and casts. Most visitors are disappointed. They expect something realistic pertaining to the assassination. But the building has been so altered that it requires a pretty strong imagination to turn the interior into a theater and picture the scene of that terrible April night. Not even the box in which the shot was fired remains. The attendants can only point out about where it was. Sometimes unscrupulous guides have taken their credulous victims to a back window and boldly claimed that Booth leaped down full thirty feet to the alley in making his escape. They reminded the listeners that Booth's leg was fractured, and that his capture was hastened by the difficulty he experienced in getting about. This leap from the window they said was what caused the injury.

The truth is, Booth jumped from the box to the stage after shooting the President, and as he did so his spur caught in a flag and threw him. Thus it was he received the injury to his leg. But the fracture did not prevent him from running through the passages back of the stage, reaching the exit into the alley, mounting his horse and riding away. The flag on which Booth caught was one which had been loaned to the proprietor of the theater that night to decorate the President's box. It was one of two which belonged to the Treasury Guard Regiment, composed of employes of the Treasury, and can be seen any day in its glass case at that department.

THE ASSASSIN'S BACKBONE.

The failure to gratify morbid curiosity by the preservation of the interior, or part of it, in the condition it was the night of the assassination has been partially atoned for. All these years there has been on exhibition in the corner above where the President sat that fatal night a little glass case containing three pieces from a human backbone. The sections rest one upon another. Between the first and second, as they stand, there is a jagged hole, showing where a bullet struck. Attached to the case is a tag with this awfully scientific inscription:

"No. 4086. The third, fourth and fifth cervical vertebræ. A conoidal carbine ball entered the right side, comminuting the base of the right lamina of the fourth vertebræ, fracturing longitudinally and separating it from the spinous process, at the same time fracturing the fifth through its pedicles, and involving that transverse process. The missile passed directly through the canal, with a slight inclination downward and to the rear, emerging through the left bases of the fourth and fifth laminæ, which are comminuted, and from which fragments were embedded in the muscles of the neck. The bullet, in its course, avoided the large cervical vessels. From a case where death occurred in a few hours after injury, April 26, 1865."

The "case" is that of J. Wilkes Booth, the assassin of Mr. Lincoln. The three vertebræ are nearly all of the remains of the mad actor which have not crumbled to dust. A small bottle, such as surgeons use to preserve specimens in alcohol, goes with the portion of Booth's backbone. A clot of grayish-looking matter floats in the preserving liquid. It is the part of the spinal cord which was struck by Boston Corbett's bullet when Booth received his death wound in the burning barn on the Garrett plantation, near Bowling Green, Va., eleven days after the assassination. Lincoln and Booth were shot in very nearly the same portion of the body. The ball in each case entered near the base of the brain. In Lincoln's case the nerves were paralyzed and no pain was suffered. Booth's torture, until death came, was the most severe that could have been devised. People gaze and gaze at these two specimens, after they learn what they are, and go away satisfied. Of late years there has stood near the Booth relics a jar which possesses almost equal interest with its neighbors. It contains the spleen of Guiteau, the assassin of President Garfield.

FREAKS OF BULLETS.

These specimens draw attention for their historical associations. But the museum abounds in things that are of vastly more intrinsic interest. There are object lessons illustrating the wonderful freaks of rifle balls. One of these is a section of a skull with the ball which struck it split in two, one-half going inside and inflicting the wound which caused death, the other half remaining on the outside between the scalp and the skull. The soldier who received this remarkable wound at Spottsylvania lived twenty-three days.

Still more wonderful than this last case is one where a minie ball struck the soft bone of the nose and divided. Along with this goes the head of the man who put the muzzle of a pistol in his mouth and fired. The ball passed through the jugular vein and stuck fast in the bone, acting as a stopper on hemorrhage from the vein. The would-be suicide lived seventeen years before yielding up his head to make museum visitors marvel.

INDIAN BABIES.

The museum possesses quite a collection of papooses picked up by the army surgeons in the wild West and forwarded. The withered and battered remains have been "cured" by long exposure to sun and wind on the elevated stages where the Indians used to bury, but they are not pleasant to look upon. The most notable of these papooses is a little chap, said to have been found in a tree near Laramie. He is dressed in a suit of blue, upon which the Indian mother has sewed a great collection of buttons. Around the neck is a string of beads, and on the feet are little embroidered moccasins.

Reminiscences of the Indian wars are numerous. There is the skull of one brave who only succumbed when he had been sabered nine times. At least that must be the conclusion, for the cranium shows nine distinct penetrating cuts from the sword. Of course, it is not to be supposed that the white man amused himself by whacking away needlessly at the red man's head after the latter was hors de combat. The skull belonged to an Araucanian, who was killed by Chilean soldiers.

A WITHERED ARM.

One day after the war closed there came to Washington a one-armed veteran. He had a bundle wrapped in paper, and he said it was something that ought to be in the museum. When the wrappings were taken off there was brought to view a human arm. The muscles had dried hard and the skin had been tanned by the action of wind and sun. So complete had been Nature's process that there was nothing disagreeable but the looks of the arm. The drying and shrinking of the flesh had left the jagged bone bare at one end, and the same causes had clinched the fingers at the other. The veteran's story was that in the battle at Gettysburg a cannon ball had taken off his arm. Unconscious he had been carried to the field-hospital and then to the general hospital. Months afterwards he had regained his health and had been discharged. Curiosity prompted him to visit the battlefield and live over his terrible experience. He found, after some trouble, the spot where he stood when the cannon ball discovered him. It was in a cornfield, and there between the furrows was the arm in the well-preserved condition apparent. The scientific gentlemen of the museum did not think it worth while to take the soldier's affidavit. They saw at a glance that the arm was an interesting specimen aside from its history. They took it, mounted it upon two supports in a glass case, and gave it a place of prominence in the museum.

WONDERFUL WORK WITH ARROWS.

Some of the wonderful accomplishments of the Indians with their arrows are illustrated in a very realistic manner. These arrows had heads made of the iron hoops of barrels. A shoulder blade of a buffalo with the thin, frail-looking arrow-head piercing it is shown. Upon close examination the visitor discovers that the point projects through the outer side of the bone. The only explanation is that the arrow must have passed through the body of the buffalo and struck the shoulder blade on the inside. These arrow-heads may be taken between the fingers and bent with ease, they are so thin; but shot from the bow by the Indians they went through obstacles which would have stopped a bullet. They penetrated bones without fracturing them, and they made cuts as clean as the keenest surgical blades. The Apache arrow-head of soft iron has pierced where a leaden projectile would have flattened.

The skull, with an arrow point driven into it almost to the head, is a reminiscence of an Indian attack on a stage in Western Texas. Three United States soldiers were the guard. One was killed outright, one escaped, and the other crawled away in the grass with this arrow point sticking in his brain, a bullet hole through an arm, another through a leg, and a third chunk of lead in his breast. This man lay in the grass until the Indians had disappeared, and then he made his way afoot 160 miles across the plains of Texas. The stage was attacked on the 1st of September, 1870, and seven days later the man limped up to Fort Concho. He was still in possession of his mental faculties, but he died on the 19th of September, ten days after entering the hospital. When the post-mortem was held the surgeons found that the arrow point had gone straight through the bone and into the brain, making a wound which, under ordinary conditions, would be considered sufficient to cause immediate death. Alongside of the skull is shown a piece of the stage door, of hard wood, with another arrow head sticking in it.

BROKEN NECKS MENDED.

Some people may think this a rather incredible story, but there are plenty of things in the Army Medical Museum to show that exceptions exist in the ordinary laws of mortality. A broken neck usually kills. There is exhibited a skull with a portion of the spinal column attached, which came from the Catacombs of Paris. Any surgeon can see that the column was broken where it reaches the head, and that the parts mended themselves before death came. The United States has furnished one case of this kind, and the evidence is shown here in the dislocated vertebræ grown together again.

NATURE'S SUBSTITUTE FOR BONES.

The visitor sees hung up in the cases here and there sections of bones which possess no significance until it is learned that they have been taken from the arms or legs of men still living. In cases where balls had shattered the bone surgeons sometimes preferred the operation of cutting out a section instead of adopting the shorter, and, for them, easier method of amputation. One of these excised bones hung up in the museum came from the arm of a veteran who was for years an attache of the institution. He used to walk up to the case occasionally and shake his fist at it. Muscle and sinews had developed in place of the missing bone to such an extent as to make the arm strong enough for more than ordinary use. This man could lift 200 pounds with the arm from which the bone had been taken.

Pension Commissioner Black had one of his arms excised, and there is a considerable portion of it which is only gristle and muscle. The bone is gone, and he becomes painfully aware of the fact when he tries to shake hands with 400 or 500 people.

GENERAL SICKLES' CONTRIBUTION.

No. 1335 is a large bone with the splintering about midway where the bullet struck. The tag says: "Major-General D. E. S., United States Volunteers, Gettysburg, July 2d; amputated in the lower third of the thigh, by Surgeon T. Sim, United States Volunteers, on the field. Stump healed rapidly, and subject able to ride in carriage July 16th; completely healed, so that he mounted his horse in September, 1863. Contributed by the subject." It is the leg of General Sickles, who is still cheerfully stumping about New York and Washington.

THE PROPER TIME TO GO.

The bones are much more agreeable to look upon than the casts. There is some satisfaction in seeing a man who was seven feet high in life wholly undressed, particularly when his bones are bleached glistening white and the joints and attachments are of bright metal. It is also interesting to see the mouth of a child with the second teeth just coming forward to crowd the first set out. But when one turns and gazes upon the illustrated process by which a soldier whose nose has been shot away is made to look less repulsive by having another nose cut out of his cheek and grafted on, it is time to go.

REMOVAL FROM THE HISTORIC BUILDING.

The old building has outlived its usefulness as the Army Museum. Within a few days the doors have been closed to visitors. The glass cases and their contents are being moved out and carted across the avenue half a mile south to the new $200,000 museum, which is receiving its finishing touches. Two years ago Congress made the appropriation, and now the new store-house for the relics is ready to receive them. As the merry sight-seers troop along Pennsylvania avenue, an express wagon loaded high with grim skeletons every now and then blocks the way.

The new building is on the Mall or Smithsonian grounds, only a stone's throw from the National Museum. It is a substantial three-story brick building, without any particular claims to architectural beauty. But it has plenty of windows, streets on two sides, and the park on the west and north. It will be a great improvement over Ford's Theater, so far as the comfort and health of the clerks is concerned, and it will give more than double the room of the old hall for the display of the surgical curiosities.

THE ACCUMULATION OF CURIOSITIES.

The enlargement does not come too soon. In 1862 the collection numbered 1,300 specimens. When the war closed there were some 10,000, and now there are 20,000. Rarely a day goes by without additions. They come from all parts of the country. The profession takes an interest in sending curious things, and the Government encourages this by paying transportation charges and doing all the preparation and mounting of the objects. Students in medicine come to Washington for the benefits the museum conveys. There is before the present Congress a bill providing for the issue of